

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF MY FIELD EDUCATION
EXPERIENCES IN TWO AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCHES IN THE ATLANTA AREA.

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PERFACE

This analysis is a direct result of the author's experiences in the field of Christian Education in two separate churches.

In one church the author functioned primarily as an ordinary teacher in the Sunday School while in the second church the author was in a somewhat administrative position. In both churches therefore the author was involved basically in Christian Education.

Thus at the onset there must be some clarification on the nature and educational mission of the church. There will be an attempt to answer the question: What is Christian Education? And finally the first part will give some attention to the components of the curriculum of Christian Education,

Part two will review the experiences of the author in teaching and in administration in the two churches while part three will deal with analysis of the project, conclusions, recommendations and the list of books used as references.

I. T. C.
April 15, 1966

Peter Eric Adotey Addo

PART I
INTRODUCTION

I. THE NATURE AND EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE CHURCH

The Nature Of The Church

"The church", according to D. C. Wyckoff "is that company of persons which has been called by God and drawn into a fellowship, in order to worship, witness and work in Christ's name and by the power of the Holy Spirit. The first task of the church is worship, a service that relates the Christian community to its Creator, Judge, Loving Father, Savior, and source of strength and guidance."¹

In the New Testament, there are presented to us three dimensions of the nature of the church. The church first of all is the Body of Christ. "You are the body of Christ and individual members of it."³ A body suggests a head and that head is Christ who is the central source of life pouring vitality through every part of the body. Secondly, the church is A Community of the Holy Spirit. "The church is the fellowship of the spirit or the Koinonia."³ According to Lewis J. Sherill, "the Koinonia is a community which transcends ordinary human

¹D. Campbell Wyckoff, The Theory and Design of Christian Education Curriculum, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), p. 18.

²I Corinthians ;2:27 (R. S. V.)

³Howard Grimes, The Church Redemptive, (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1958), p. 50.

community in that God is present in it. Koinonia is a community in which the Holy Spirit is present in each relationship within the community."⁴ Therefore, the spirit apart from the church would be energy without an instrument and the church without the Holy Spirit would be a body without the principle of life. Thus, the program and organization or the church are means for the Holy Spirit to work.

Thirdly, the church is the Covenant Community of God, the eklesia, which means a purposeful community, thus an assembly called out which seeks to obey God within the world. This idea of the Covenant first originated in the Old Testament as God sought Israel for the purpose of witnessing. Christ initiated the New Covenant, "by calling all men to be his followers."⁵ But the heart of the Covenant is that the church is the body alive in the Holy Spirit existing for the purpose of witnessing the hope and forgiveness and telling the story of God's redemptive love.

The Educational Mission of the Church

According to Wyckoff, the New Testament sets forth in clear terms the mission of the church which is to worship, witness and work for the redemptive purpose of God as exemplified through Jesus Christ.

⁴Lewis J. Sherrill, The Gift of Power, (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1955), p. 52.

⁵Matthew 26:28 (R. S. V.).

The church, having a story to tell, presupposes an educated people. Thus as an integral part of its worshipping, witnessing, and serving, the church recognized its significant task of bringing the outsider into the fold, providing Christian nurture for him and all others with him.

Therefore, Christian education is based on the fact that we have a Gospel. Christian education begins when we are confronted with this Gospel. Christian education thus is that ministry of the church which provides the educational undergirding to the entire mission of the church.

What is Christian Education?

On the task of Christian education, D. Campbell Wyckoff states: "The task of Christian Education is the nurture of Christian life."⁶ To this must be added G. A. Coe's definition of Christian Education. Coe begins with the fact that we have a Gospel and that Christian Education begins when we are confronted with this Gospel. It is education within a social process, but the community is the Christian home in one hand and the church is a redemptive fellowship in the other hand. He goes on to point out that it involves the individual as he makes a personal decision, and it has an impact on society in terms of vocational responsibility. Coe insists further that Christian Education is concerned with history because God chose to reveal his nature through histori-

⁶Ibid., p. 17.

cal events, and thus the past is essential for an understanding of the present and our hope for the future. Finally, according to Coe, "Christian Education begins and ends with personal relationships, not only in the formative influences that determine Christian character but also in the other attitudes of society that impinge upon our basic loyalties and sometimes destroy them."⁷

But perhaps Adelaide Case provides us with a more enlightened definition of what Christian Education is. According to her:

"Christian Education is the effort to make available for our generation children, young people, and adults the accumulated treasures of Christian life and thought, in such a way that God in Christ may carry on his redemptive work in each human soul and in the common life of man."⁸

Thus, the center of Christian Education is not man but God. It is the task of the Christian educator to bring the individual Christian into the right relationship with the God of Jesus Christ and with his fellows, so that by grace the individual may do the task to which he is called. According to R. C. Miller, "to come into such relationship involves a decision, and thus Christian Education is intimately concerned with evangelism."⁹ This means, therefore, that the teacher must confront every learner with Jesus Christ, so

⁷ George Albert Coe, What is Christian Education, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929), p. 300.

⁸ Dora P. Chaplin, Children and Religion, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 136.

⁹ Randolph Crump Miller, Education for Christian Living, (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1959), p. 54.

that he will put his trust in God through Christ, and by the power of the Holy Spirit live as Christ's disciple within the dynamic fellowship of a truly Christian church.

Components of the Curriculum of Christian Education

"Christian Education, like Christian Theology," Miller states: "Is concerned to re-interpret Christian faith in terms of the living experiences of our own day, to discover its wider and deeper implications and to bring it into ef-¹⁰fectual relation with the issues of contemporary living." Thus, the primary objective of Christian Education is to provide opportunities for the right kinds of relationships and to interpret all relationships within the framework of the revelation of God in Christ. To be theologically valid and educationally sound, Christian Education must have a specific goal or objective. According to the statement of objective in the Cooperative Curriculum of the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ. (Cooperative Curriculum Project C. C. P.).

"The objective for Christian Education is that all persons be aware of God through His self-disclosure, especially His redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ, and that they respond in faith and love to the end that they may know, who they are and what their human situation means, grow as sons of God rooted in the Christian Community, live in the spirit of God in every relationship, fulfill their common

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 59-59.

discipleship in the world and abide in the Christian hope."¹¹

The advantage of the one objective according to the C. C. P., lies in its ability to give unity, direction and selectivity to the entire plan of Christian Education.

The C. C. P. explains the significance of the objective in this way:

"This statement of the objective is basic in that it indicates that the church's teaching ministry is addressed to man's fundamental and universal questions. Who is God? Who is my neighbor? This is the impact of the phrase "Who they are and what their human situation means." The basic quality of the objective is also shown by the fact that it indicates the distinguishing mark of education in the Christian church (as differentiated from general education): That is, that people and their particular human situations are seen first and always in relation to God's awareness of the redeeming love of God. This awareness is the initial step in becoming disciples, in becoming new creatures in Christ, or in being born again." ¹²

The C. C. P. study goes on to state that the single basic objective has several important implications:

"First, the phrase "all persons" implies the outreach and evangelistic thrust of the church's teaching ministry...the church's teaching ministry is not limited to those already within the Christian fellowship. Second, "rooted in the Christian community" provides the clue to the fact that Christian Education may be viewed as the nurturing ministry of the church, and indicates the centrality of the life of the entire Christian fellowship in that ministry of education. The church in its total life and work is the matrix of Christian nurture. Third, the ideas of awareness and response show the church's educational ministry as aiming at both an inward reality and an outward mission...that is, being the Christian in the inward spirit...and doing the Christian way in

¹¹The Church's Educational Ministry. A Curriculum Plan, The Work of the Cooperative Curriculum Project (St. Louis Missouri: The Bethany Press, 1965), p. 8.

¹²Ibid., p. 10.

all outward affairs of life. Fourth, the church in its educational ministry...seeks the redemption of man in all his relationships, personal and social, live in the spirit of God in every relationship, fulfil their common discipleship in the world...the objective, then relates the process of Christian Education redemptively to the specific life station of every person." 13

With the acceptance of the C. C. P. objective of Christian Education it is necessary now to know what may be dealt with in a Curriculum of Christian Education. According to the C. C. P.

"The scope is co-extensive with what God has revealed through

His redemptive action and its implications for man in the

whole field of relationships with God, Man, nature and history." 14

"As man responds to God in faith, love, commitment and obedience, he finds that light is thrown on all his relationships and he is empowered and enriched within these relationships." 15

Thus there seems to be three elements of the scope according to the C. C. P. study.

1. "The Christian experience of man under God the divine dimension of reality in light of the Gospel.
2. The Christian experience of man's relation to man and human dimension of reality in light of the Gospel.
3. The Christian experience of man within the world ...the natural dimension of reality in the light of the Gospel." 16

¹³Ibid., p.11.

¹⁴Ibid., p.12.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 14.

In the C. C. P. study, scope is further divided into units in the actual teaching-learning process, referred to as curriculum areas. The five curriculum areas mentioned are:

1. "Life and its setting: The meaning and experience of existence.
2. Revelation: The meaning and experience of God's self-disclosure.
3. Sonship: The meaning and experience of redemption.
4. Vocation: The meaning and experience of discipleship.
5. The Church: The meaning and experience of Christian Community." 17

On the problem of context, that is, the learning environment within which the curriculum operates, the C. C. P. study mentions that "the context of the curriculum of Christian Education is the Christian Community of faith-the Church." 18

After we become aware of the meaning, objective, scope, context and the curriculum areas of Christian Education we are at once led to the question as to when or how do we know that the objective of Christian Education is being achieved? This is answered according to the C. C. P. study when we consider the five learning tasks, based on the theory that "learning is a process of human becoming through experience in the whole field of relationships." 19 The five learning tasks are:

17 Ibid., p. 17.

18 Ibid., p. 23 .

19 Ibid., p. 24.

1. "Listening with growing alertness to the Gospel and responding in faith and love.
2. Exploring the whole field of relationships in light of the Gospel.
3. Discovering meaning and value in the field of relationships in light of the Gospel.
4. Appropriating personally the meaning and value discovered in the field of relationships in the light of the Gospel.
5. Assuming personal and social responsibility in light of the Gospel." 20.

Finally, the C. C. P. study raises the problem of the organizing principle which deals with the way in which the components of the curriculum are related to each other and the learner, and insists that the organizing principle must express a wholeness which comprehends the objective, scope, context and the learning tasks; thus, as stated by the C. C. P. study regarding the organizing principle.

"The learner becomes aware of God through his self disclosure...and responds in faith and love... when through involvement in the Christian Community ...He comes face to face with the great concerns of Christian faith and life as they are to him in his situation by ..."listing with growing alertness to the Gospel, and responding in faith and love." 21

²⁰ Ibid., p. 23.

²¹ Ibid., p, 36.

Part II

Experiences in Teaching and Administration

1. TEACHING EXPERIENCES AT SAINT MARK AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Introduction

Saint Mark African Methodist Episcopal Church (St. Mark A. M. E.) is located at the corner of Chestnut and Kennedy Streets on the northwest side of Atlanta. It is a fairly large church and can seat over two hundred members.

Physically the building is in a very good condition. The worship area is provided with both a pipe organ and a piano. The painted window glasses have recently been changed, and there are facilities for heating, and on the balcony there are places to rest too. There is a well furnished kitchen in the basement and several meeting rooms used for Sunday School Classes. Thus, each class is able to meet in a separate room while the adult class meets upstairs in a corner of the Sanctuary.

There is also a large membership at St. Mark A. M. E. Church and both the Sunday School and the Sunday Morning Worship Services are well attended.

The structure of the Sunday School is shown in chart number one and there is a strong program of Religious Edu-

cation led by Mrs. Inez G. Johnson, Superintendent. The Sunday School meets from half past nine on Sunday Mornings to half past ten. There is a quarter of an hour period of worship, usually led by the Superintendent, after which the students disperse into their various classes. The teaching period lasts for about forty-five minutes after which the students assemble again. Class attendance, contributions and announcements are read before the students are dismissed. Most of the students stay for the worship services upstairs in the Sanctuary while the rest go home. Services start at eleven in the morning and are led by the pastor, Rev. M. L. Hood, an able leader and an inspiring preacher. There are several groups in the church including a youth group. The pastor is trained and seems to have some interest in the church members and the Sunday School. This is shown by his regular visits to the Sunday School and the provision of materials for learning and teaching.

CHART I
ENROLMENT IN THE SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL

Division	Age	Total Enrolment	Attendance
Children's Division:			
1. Kindergarten	5	25	15
2. Beginners	5-6	12	12
3. Primary	6-8	20	15
4. Junior	9-11	20	15
Adult Division:			
1. Junior High	12-15	16	16
2. Senior High	16-18	13	8
3. Young People	19-24	5	5
4. Adult	25 +	30	15
TOTAL:		141	101

CHART II
NUMBER OF CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS

Director of Religious Education	1
General Superintendent (Pastor)	1
Associate Superintendents:	
a. In Children's Division	1
b. In Adult Division	1
Secretaries:	
a. In Children's Division	1
b. In Adult Division	1
Librarian	1
Teachers	15
Treasurer	1
<hr/>	
TOTAL	23
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Teaching Experiences

The author was mostly concerned with teaching the senior high students. These are the students in the tenth, eleventh and twelfth grades. Thus, before the actual teaching experiences are presented, a brief mention of the nature and needs of this group of students must be made.

The Senior High Students

The church, we have seen draws all ages of men into its fold; yet each group needs its own program and fellowship. If a church is really concerned with the needs of its members, its organization should be so arranged to provide those groupings that are most congenial. It is only through strong groups and departments that the over-all educational strategy of the local church can effectively be administered and the objective of Christian education achieved. Thus, a knowledge of the needs and characteristics of the groups must be known by the leaders. To give some idea of the basic needs of the senior high, the author has heavily drawn from Randolph Crump Miller. On the needs of this group he states:

"By middle adolescence, the conflict between teenagers and parents has often reached the stage of undeclared war. Their strong group sense causes them to band together, and they rely on peer relationships for their love and acceptance. Boy-girl relationships are often in the "steady" stage and takes a great deal of their time. Teen-agers need

this emotional independence, and at the same time they need parents who are capable of loving them in their most unlovable moments, for a real but hidden understanding of what they are going through provides an almost unrecognized-source of genuine security. Their horizon sometimes seem limited to their own egos, but it also stretches to a concern for world affairs and politics." 24

There are also certain moral conflicts facing the teenager, such as popular actions that offend his conscience, and some of the temptations are necking, drinking, cheating, and going to parties.

"The teen-ager is developing a sense of values in the mist of his conflicts, and he is using the resources of his past; for he is the product of his earliest and continuing experiences as well as of the present moment. What he learns now has significance in terms of what he has experienced through the years, for his basic decisions depend on the total personality pattern that he has developed. He is now seeing himself as a self in relation to society and he is seeking to find out what socially responsible and acceptable behavior is for him."25

Biologically, the sexual urges are moving toward maturing in a society that frowns upon sexual experiences.

"He thinks a good deal about sex, and such thoughts may touch upon kissing, bodily contact, and sexual intercourse." 26

Finally apart from developing new skills, he is inclined to think his religious position.

24 Randolph Crump Miller, Education for Christian Living, (New Jersey: PrenticeHall, Inc., 1959), p. 85

25 Ibid., p. 85.

26 Ibid., p. 86

"Religiously he is willing to face up to the decision that Jesus is his Christ. Against the background of the work of God in history. He is able to see the meaning of the redemptive act of God in Christ and thus to assimilate the saving grace of God through faith. His self-reliance is thwarted by his real need for a Savior, and he comes to this conclusion when he is provided the opportunity for self-analysis. In this way, doctrine begins to be relevant to his own experience, and he is capable of moving toward maturity in faith. When his needs are met at this level, he stays within the community of the church because it is a means of redemption for him." 22

Thus we can see that in a high school class. in the church, we face the problems of administration and organization. The main problem of the church is to understand the needs of the high school age. We also find that boys and girls of this age need a responsible seperateness from other boys and girls and a sense of full membership in the church. They want to be together; they need to do much of their planning. Yet they want someone to fall back on as a resource person. Experience has dictated that though they like to make their own decisions, they lack the resources and imagination to see what might be accomplished.

Thus they need the resources of adult guidance. But the author's experience has indicated that they must know what the adult rules and limitations are at the beginning and they

²²Ibid., p. 86

should know the reasons why, and also the purpose of a group should be clearly known and acceptable to them.

Moreover if these essentials are adhered to in the organization, administration and leadership of a group, the members will know that they are accepted in the congregation. But what is more important is that they will see that religion as the church represents it involves the whole of their lives and not just an adult-dominated Sunday Morning program.

Experiences

The teaching experiences of the author are illustrated here with actual examples of lessons. In each case the class in mind is the senior-high students. These are the students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades.

After each lesson outline the observation of the author is followed by the observation of Dr. J. Coan the director of field education.

Church: St. Mark A. M. E. Church

Lesson: I

Date: February 23, 1964

Pride and Penitence

Background Scripture - - Luke 7: 36-50

Aim: To help youth to realize that pride has no place in the conduct of Christians.

Previous Knowledge: The members of the class can read the background scripture and have heard or know the story of Simon and the repentant Woman.

Materials: Senior Scholar of the Sunday School Quarterly.

Procedure: Let class members read over the passage one or two verses per student.

2. Read through thoroughly for students to understand.
3. Outline lesson under the ff:
 - a. The Pharisee's House. Who is a Pharisee?
 - b. The Woman supposed to be a sinner. Explain and point out her sin in regard to the time.
 - c. Humility's Position
Open for students to contribute their opinion on humility here.
 - d. Is the Host Rude? Explain the normal Host-Guest relationship then and now.
 - e. Christ's parting words to the Woman.
 - f. Points to remember:
 1. Pride and humility do not dwell in the same breast.
 11. Let us seek Jesus for the same reason of giving him our lives and not to test his power.

111. Jesus will come into your life
in the measure that you open
your heart to him.

Observation of the Director

"The outline is satisfactory for a beginning. I would suggest that after you have become oriented, make individual assignments (provided this does not drive the students away from the class) and eliminate the reading of the lesson text.

Your outline should indicate the group or class for whom the lesson is intended."

-J. R. Coan

Church: St. Mark A. M. E. Church

Lesson: 2

March 1, 1964

Class: Senior

Age Group: 11 plus

Christ in our Homes

Background Scripture: Luke 10: 38 - 42, John 11: 1 - 12

Aim: To help students to be better members of their respective families. To show by discussion that a family that honors Christ, has a better, much better foundation than that family in which Christ is not honored.

Procedure: With the help of the class bring out some of the crisis i. e., daily crisis that face a normal family.

2. Discuss each point and apply each to their various families.
3. Try to help students to bring out some of the ways families solve their problems.
4. Indicate the diversities in each family and point out that as members of a family or church, school etc., have different ideas pertaining to different problems, e. g. Mary and Martha.
5. Thus we may have different views of Jesus Christ.

6. Let students mention times and occasions during which Christ is brought in, e. g. meal time, bedtime, Christmas and Easter.

Finally point out that the family that honors Christ listens to what he has to say. Ask class how and discuss each salient point. Indicate one way i. e. to hear the voice of the Master we must know how to pray.

Author's Observation

"It will be absolutely impossible to give a very fair appraisal of how effective my teaching was last week, because:

1. It is too early for such an attempt.
2. A fair estimate of how much achieved is impossible in any way.

In spite of the above, I hold the view that I was able to spur the minds of the students to think in terms of their home environment and to associate some of what the Sunday School teachers said about it.

This time the oral reading and subsequent discussion of each verse of the Bible passage was gone. In its place all students joined in the discussion due to the fact that we started from a known subject to the unknown. From differences in their homes, school and neighborhood we plunged in to the Christian living proper.

All students enjoyed the lesson, all took part and many did ask questions. In my own personal estimation, this is

a very good sign, a sure and an encouraging start."

Director's Observation

"This outline is an advance step upon the one of last week in many ways. Its contents are rich. Your procedure tends to be creative. This is commendable. Will it work? I shall be glad to get your reaction on the response of the class to this presentation."

Lesson: 3

Class: Senior

March 8, 1964

The Man Born Blind

Background Scripture: John 9: 13-17, 24-25, 33-38

Aim: The purpose of this lesson is to help the senior students to hold to their faith in Christ in spite of the opinions or rejections of others.

Procedure: Let students mention some of their own ideas on several issues of the day. Example, about talking, dancing, clothing, right and wrong, etc.

2. Find out how it is to hold other views in school.
3. Link this to things like going to church, etc.
4. Discuss with the students how their faith or in that matter their opinions are tested.
5. Find out how they react and how others react too.
b. Mention rejection by our circle, etc.
6. Link this to how the man born blind stood up among the other Jews and how their parents did not deny him Christ.

With that as a background point out that: Christians witness in spite of pressure.

Not even when rejected by friends.

Food for thought:

The problem of sin and its relationship to illness.

Author's Observation

A very interesting Sunday for me. I think I might have hit the lesson too hard at home. There seems to be a conflict between students' behavior and what students' consider to be right and wrong.

Seniors seem to avoid linking their actual or personal life behavior to right and wrong.

In other words it is all right or they know that lying is generally bad but they will lie to get out of trouble. They seem to present me with big challenge for the future.

Director's Observation

Your observations are very fruitful.

Lesson: 4

Class: Senior

March 15, 1964

Pilate Judged by Jesus

Background Scripture:

Matthew 27: 11-26

Aim: To bring home to students the fact that we are daily judged by Christ in every area of our life.

Procedure: Review the incidents of the trial of Christ before Pilate.

2. Discuss with the students the consequences of rejectivity.

3. Discuss how we are daily confronted by Christ and judged by him.
4. Let the students mention and then discuss what attitudes of Pilate are still prevalent today.
5. Let them play with this question. What does the silence of Christ before Pilate mean to us (them)?
6. Did Pilate have any choices? Discuss.
7. Mention and discuss the spiritual significance of Christ's confrontation with Roman Law.

Writer's Observation

I had to combine two classes, my class and a junior class. The lesson was the same as outlined and with few variations here and there was adopted for both. The class members seemed to have enjoyed the lesson.

Remarks of Director:

"You have a clear cut aim and a sufficient number of points to occupy the class profitably for the entire period."

Director's Observations

Your emphasis on the fact that the children seemed to have enjoyed the class session is just what should be for it is at least one type of response. In future lessons this observation of response might be carried a little further. Does there seem to have been any intellectual illumination? And feeling of either spiritual or intellectual insight? Any desire of a change of outlook on life?

Lesson: 5

Class: Senior

March 22, 1964

Two Men-Two Destinies

Background Scripture:

Luke 23 32-47

Aim: To help seniors to understand how two men equally
quality and equally in need of help respond in op-
posite directions.

Procedure: Discuss the general character of the two men.

2. Compare the attitudes of the criminals;
 - a. Towards their crime.
 - b. Towards Jesus Christ.
3. Let the class members discuss the pros and cons of both.

Point out the salient facts in the conversation at the cross. Bring into the discussion, the differences in response of people to Christ and compare it to their own lives and homes. Point out that the difference in response is due to a difference in the men themselves and not in the appeal which their contacts with Christ offered.

Author's Observations

Class showing signs of improvement. The students ask more questions and enjoy the discussion of real life situations. They are a storehouse of information. Reception fair to good. Attendance is also fair six-eight students at a time.

Lesson: 6

Class: Senior

March 29, 1964

Thomas and Mary Magdalene

Background Scripture:

John 20: 1-29

Aim: To present to senior young people in a form of discussion, experiences of Mary and Thomas on that first Easter Day.

Procedure: Find out if seniors know what Easter stands for.
---Day on which Christ Arose.

2. Present the way the shadow of death fell on them. (Mary and Thomas).
3. Ask the class more of the worse troubles that can befall a man.
4. Show how both have experiences with the risen Lord.
5. Lead seniors to have the assurance that if Christ lives we should not be troubled by problems of life.
6. Ask this question: Do we really believe that Jesus Christ is risen?

Author's Observations

Attendance was as expected. The class was overflowing with students. We tried hard to get all those present to join in the discussion after a great deal of difficulty. Naturally, seniors are all thinking of home and good things of Easter. On the whole the lesson was not badly received. We made it known to the visitors how much the Sunday School can offer them.

Director's Observations

Questions:

Do you think that the interest in Easter celebration, with dress and eggs over shadowed the spiritual significance of the occasions?

Lesson: 7

Class: Senior

April 5, 1964

This is God's Universe

Background Scripture:

Job 38: 1-11

Aim: To help senior young people to understand some few facts about the origin and nature of the universe.

Procedure: Discuss Genesis as the story of the origin and nature of the universe. Mention biological theories and physical theories.

2. Then lead seniors on in a discussion of the subject pointing or bringing out the ff:
 - a. The world is a law abiding world.
 - b. The Bible presents an orderly world under God.
 - c. The Christian lives in a world of law and order.

Challenge youth to live in a Christian life in a new and challengeing world.

Author's Observations

I personally enjoyed the lesson today. There were students from the adult class in our class and we had a most interesting discussion on the origin of life. The class enjoyed it and did most of the talking. Most promised to come back for a continuation.

Director's Observations

On your last point of the outline you listed as challenging youth to live the Christian life. Do you think that the challenge was accepted?

Lesson: 8

Class: Senior

April 12, 1964

Man in God's Universe

Aim: To help senior young people to understand some few facts about the origin and nature of the universe.

Procedure: Open the class with a few remarks on last week's discussion.

2. Discuss God's ownership of the world.
3. Discuss Christian stewardship in the light of the world and the lesson.
4. Lead the class to understand that they are children of God thus more than mere animals and worth more than anything else in the world.
5. Discuss the complications of equality and brotherhood in today's lesson.

Director's Observations

Point three might be focussed upon as a means of helping students to understand stewardship's obligation, relating it to the whole range of life experiences.

Lesson: 9

Class: Senior

April 26, 1964

The Christian Loves His Neighbor

Facing family tensions

Background Scripture:

Matthew 10: 34-39

Aim: To help seniors to understand the Christian's personal relationships in the family, the community, job and leisure. Let the class join in the discussion of juvenile relation, delinquency-divorce. Try to find out from the class how these may be solved.

Director's Observations

Perhaps you will bring in the scripture background in your discussion. But you do not have it here on the outline.

Author's Observations

The scripture background was left out here for a purpose. It was read and referred to. There was a heated discussion in which even those who had kept silent joined in.

Personally, I have no means of judging how successful my teaching is but when all the students seem to enjoy and want to participate in the lesson, and when they are able to freely refer to their own personal life examples, I take it to be a "high degree of probability" that the lesson is sinking in and the aim or goal is being somewhat achieved.

This lesson was not altogether finished with for the next part read the next lesson (10).

Lesson: 10

Class: Senior

May 3, 1964

The Christian and His Neighbor

Facing family tensions (cont'd)

Scripture Background

Matthew 10: 34-39

Aim: To help senior young people or to bring them face to face with the adult view of the relationships of the family and exchange some ideas. Let class combine with older youth class.

Previous Knowledge:

There seems to be a lack of communication between students and adults in the church. This lesson is a test project after many weeks in the church to find out if we can in a way bring a better communication between the adults and the youth so as to cement the fact that the Christian principles of life we talk of in class are not just for the sake of the Sunday School but they are to be applied by both youth and adults in their daily lives.

Procedure: After reading the scripture open the meeting with a few remarks about the scriptural background. Let the parents start with their interpretation of the reading. And ask youth to agree or disagree as they see fit.

2. What's youth opinion of adults and their relationship?
 - a. In the church
 - b. In the school
 - c. In life as a whole
3. Let both give their views.
4. Apply the scripture to our daily lives at home and the church.
 - a. What do the parents demand from the youth?
 - b. Are present day youth over and against parental care?
 - c. Are youth "irreligious"?
5. Let both parents and youth discuss these points and apply them to specific homely examples.
6. Act as the moderator.

Author's Observations

I must say that I am totally amazed at the outcome of this project. The parents were wonderful. They welcomed the idea and that was, after they had asked me a few questions on general life (it seems these have been disturbing them for a while) and then questions on the scripture, we plunged straight into the discussion in which youth and parents were just enthusiastic. The adults were "suprised" (it seemed to me) at the points and observations of the youth. There was complete freedom and everyone spoke out freely and we all had a good time.

If I have my way I shall try and encourage this sort of communication in the church school and make it a basis of our Sunday School. One will be suprised at the impact it has on a child who sits down for the first time to talk of life with parents. And parents on the other hand too were glad to have the views of youth brought to them.

On the whole the few weeks I have spent with my class have been most enjoyable and profitable. There are signs of improvement. The attendance increased and punctuality was the order of the day. A large number of students were present at each Sunday class. Most of all they stay for worship service.

There was complete freedom in discussion. The "shy" ones are now talking and contributing to the discussion. And more questions are being asked. They seem to be able to comprehend that the principles we discuss in class are applicable to life. It has been a time well spent.

EXPERIENCES IN ADMINISTRATION AT MOUNT ZION AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Introduction

Mount Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church (Mt. Zion A. M. E.) is located at College Park on the outskirts of Atlanta about eight miles north, from the center of the city. It is a basement church at the corner of Columbia and Napoleon Streets. The part of the church being used as the sanctuary is the first part of the new church being built since the previous one was destroyed by fire about six years ago. It seems as if the construction has stopped. Both the Sunday School and Sunday Morning worship are held at the same place. There are no classrooms thus various sections of the sanctuary are used.

The basic structure of the Sunday School is shown in the chart but in actuality the author observed only about three classes being held each time: the adult, the primary and the junior high class where the senior high students joined whenever they were present. The Sunday School starts at half past nine and lasts for about forty-five minutes after the brief worship and closing services at the beginning and end respectively. The worship service for the church starts at eleven

in the morning and is led by the pastor Rev. M. M. Turner, who does not seem to have the expected interest in the program of Christian Education. He explained his lack of interest as due to lack of adequate time which he cannot devote to his flock due to outside interest in this case, his private business.

It is a very simple church with a small membership though there are several young people in the neighborhood. Most of them are Sunday School and Church drop outs. His preaching is shallow and he does not seem to prepare for the Sunday Worship Service. He lacks leadership abilities it seems and there seems to be a great gulf between the pastor and the congregation.

CHART III
ENROLMENT IN THE SUNDAY CHURCH SCHOOL

Devision	Age	Total Enrolment	Attendance
Children's Division:			
1. Kindergarten	2-5	45	30
2. Primary	6-8	15	10
3. Junior	9-11	15	14
Adult Division:			
1. Junior High	12-16	18	11
2. Senior High	16-18	14	8
3. Young People	19-24	5	5
4. Adult	25 +	20	16
TOTAL:		127	89

CHART IV
NUMBER OF CHURCH SCHOOL WORKERS

Director of Religious Education	None
General Superintendent	1
Associate Superintendents:	
a. In Children's Division	1
b. In Adult Division	1
Secretaries:	
a. In Children's Division	2
b. In Adult Division	2
Teachers	10
Assistant Teachers	10
<hr/>	
TOTAL:	27
<hr/>	
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EXPERIENCES

Unlike St. Mark A. M. E. Church where we found a strong program of Christian education for the students, there was no strong program at Mt. Zion A. M. E. Church when the author got there. The need for a program to bring back the drop-outs who were mostly the high school students was evident and felt by all. Thus, all the author's time was devoted in an attempt to establish a program of Christian education for the high school students in the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades.

This was started by announcing a youth day program. A sizable number turned up when a meeting was called. During the meeting, which was led by the author, it was suggested that the students were to take charge of the morning worship services on the coming second Sunday, which they did enjoy. It was further agreed that we meet at five in the afternoon of each second Sunday in each month for discussion and studies. After the first meeting a youth study fellowship was instituted with two officers, a leader and a secretary. The students were given the chance to help in building the program of the group. By consent certain topics were selected as discussion topics for each second Sunday after-

noon. The followings are some topics that were discussed.

1. The history of the New Testament
2. Principles of Christian Living
3. What is a Christian Family?
4. The place of the Church in Contemporary Society.
5. Sex and dating of youth
7. The world in which Christ lived.

For each topic, experts in the field were invited to lead the discussion group. At other times there were panel discussions. Each meeting lasted for two hours and there was an informal refreshment hour after the discussion.

At each meeting new members were present and soon the youth in other churches were there as regulars. Later the meetings were increased from Second Sundays to Second and Fourth Sundays.

Sample Meeting

Topic for discussion:

The world in which Christ lived. Previously the students have been asked to read one of the Synoptic Gospels, and sample questions were given to them to take home in the form shown next as a guide to reading.

After each true statement, write "yes" in the blank provided; if false, write "No."

1. Palestine is a large country about half the size of the United States_____.
2. Augustus Caesar ruled the world in Jesus' day
_____.
3. The common language in Palestine was Aramaic
_____.
4. The time when Jesus lived was an age of war and political turmoil_____.
.
5. The religions of that day, both pagan and Jewish, were a confusion of ideas about God_____.
6. Judaism was well-known beyond the confines of Palestine_____.
7. The Pharisees were a powerful Jewish sect who held to the traditions of the past_____.
8. The Sadducees were a class of poor and illiterate Jews who had little influence with the people
_____.

Each student was then to bring to class his or her own list of questions. On the day of the meeting, after the meeting was called to order by the student leader, prayers were offered by a previously chosen student, then a song was sang and the report of the last meeting read by the secretary. The student leader then handed the meeting over to the author. Some of the discussion and study meetings lasted for more than one meeting time. The following are selected examples of some of the topics that lasted for more than one meeting time.

The World of Christ

This was an introductory talk to the students in order to make Christ more real to them. Thus this outline:

1. Authority for the story: The Four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Matthew, Mark and Luke tell us what Jesus did.

John tells us what He is.

1. A preview of Christ's life.

"Here is a young man who was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until he was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a house. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never put his foot outside a big city. He never traveled 200 miles from the place where he was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but himself. While he was still a young man, the tide of popular opinion

turned against him. His friends ran away. He was turned over to his enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to the cross between two thieves. While he was dying, his executioners gambled for the only piece of property he had on earth, and that was his coat. When he was dead, he was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. Nineteen wide centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race and the leader of the column of progress. I am far within the mark when I say that all the armies that were ever built, and all the parliaments that ever sat, and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as has the One Solitary life." 28

2. Why this study?

- (1). To present the events in the life of Christ in their natural order as nearly as possible. This is called the Chronology.

The Surroundings of Jesus

As you no doubt know, Jesus was born in Palestine, a country smaller than the state of Vermont. It is about 140 miles long and 60 or 70 miles wide. Nazareth, where Jesus grew up, is only 70 miles from Jerusalem in a straight line.

The Roman Emperor Augustus ruled the world in those days, and Jesus' tiny homeland was a part of the vast Roman Empire. Julius Caesar, uncle to Augustus, was the great builder of the Empire, which included all the countries bordering on the

²⁸ Author's own summary of the life of Christ based on the Synoptic Gospels.

Mediterranean Sea.

Here are some facts that will help you to understand what life was like in Christ's day:

1. Language. Greek was spoken in the eastern Mediterranean countries, while Latin was prevalent in the western area. The language used by Christ and his disciples was Aramaic, a language which had long been spoken by several nations surrounding Judea, and was widely used as the language of business and trade. After the Babylonian captivity, it was the language of the masses, Hebrew being understood only by scholars.

2. Politics. During the forty-five years of the reign of Augustus (31 B.C. to A.D. 14) wealth and prosperity were general throughout the empire. Comparative peace prevailed also under the immediate successors of Augustus. People of many lands enjoyed Roman citizenship, and there was more or less harmony among the races under the world wide state of Rome. This gave trade and commerce great opportunities for expansion and also prepared the way for the spread of Christianity.

3. Religion. There were many confused ideas about God. Emperor Augustus was regarded by his supporters as a "God". Statues were erected to him throughout the empire, and an imperial cult was developed.

Stoicism was a sort of pantheistic philosophy which regarded God as present in all living things. And, since the

world is controlled by divine law, the Stoics contended that man should freely conform to whatever destiny was his, unsubdued by either joy or grief, pain or pleasure.

The Epicureans, in opposition to the Stoics, while recommending virtue, taught that pleasure is the highest good. Stoicism and Epicureanism were popular chiefly with the Greeks.

Judaism, the religion of the Hebrews with its multiplied forms and ceremonies, was widely believed. Millions of Jews, descendants of the tribes that had been scattered by the Assyrians and Babylonians, had carried their religion with them, and there were many Gentiles who had accepted the faith of Israel. Judaism, however, was divided into several sects. Chief among these were the Pharisees, who were most anxious to keep the nation true to the traditions of the past and to keep alive the hope and expectation of the coming Messiah. The Sadducees, composed mostly of persons of wealth and influence, were strong rivals of the Pharisees. They stressed the moral law but denied the authority of tradition and the doctrines of the immortality of the soul, the resurrection, and the existence of angels. They also discounted the Messianic hope. The Essenes opposed the ritualism and formalism of the Pharisees. They took no part in public affairs passed their lives in retired places seeking by self-denial prayers to realize their ideal of Levitical purity. They believed in the immortality of the soul but denied the resurrection of the body. It was into this kind of world that

Christ came to reveal the true God to man.

4. Student's questions were then discussed in small groups of up to five for half an hour after which, all the students met again for a general questioning and discussion period.
5. Cards were distributed to students to write down their reactions and observations at the end of the period. There are always a reception period at the end of each meeting period. The discussions were generally carried further to the reception informally. On other occasions special people were invited to participate due to their experiences which they shared with the group. An example was our discussion of sex and dating.

On Sex and Dating

There were special panelists. The author acted as the moderator. Dr. Roy Hunter, a noted zoologist at Atlanta University and Mr. Harold Bandernalle who is director of social work program at Atlanta University were invited. From the community we invited one of the teachers at the local high school and a local social worker at the community center at College Park.

Sample Program-Sex and Dating

- I. Call to order.....Leader
- II. Prayers.....by a student

III. Selection....by a student trio

IV. Announcements by Secretary

V. Introduction of panelists...by the director

After giving the biological aspect of sex, Dr. Hunter was followed by Mr. Bandernalle on the social dynamics of sex. The high school teacher followed with her experiences of sex problems as a youth and as a teacher in the community. Lastly, the social worker brought out her experiences as a worker in the neighborhood.

VI. A period of questioning followed. Some questions raised were on, when to date, the authority of parents, views on curfews, kissing and sexual relations. Mr Bandernelle dealt with most of them and the students at one time seemed to ask his opinion of premarital sex.

The meeting was lively and the parents present gladly joined and shared their experiences frankly and intelligently. The discussions as usual continued on to the reception time.

Part III

Analysis of the Project

OBSERVATIONS

The test of Christian Education lies in what happens to persons at home and in the church. But the rising drop-out from Sunday School during adolescence shows that Christian Education is not succeeding as it should in involving the youth to be committed members of the church. The experiences of the author in the two churches point to this fact.

Christian Education from the experiences of the author must be much more than lectures or stories of two thousand years ago, it must be made relevant and meaningful to the daily experiences of the children by trained leaders and not volunteer laymen which is the case today.

Moreover, the leader in the church must be made to face the demands and tasks of Christian Education squarely and honestly. They must not only be interested in helping the pupils or the church, but must have a positive growing faith of their own to share with the learners, through seeking, studying, praying, living and examining together. Here again the kind of leadership offered by the pastor is important to the watchful eyes of the young people. His actions are interpreted and analysed by the students and if there are

any drop-outs it is always due to poor leadership and un-inviting or poor boring lectures and sermons by leaders who do not know the growing demand of this age group.

Most of their questions are thrown out by both pastor and lay leaders. And this is evident in the preaching of the pastor who seems to devote all his words to the adults as they are the only members in the church. Thus we can see that the recent large increase in church school drop-out is not due to the youth who it seems are ready to "drop-in" any time something interesting is taking place in which they can be recognized, or be allowed to participate freely, or learn and share their experiences.

Secondly, one other cause of church drop-out is the lack of leadership. Here, it refers to trained lay-leadership which is very lacking in most churches. Though the need for money is urgent in the church, at times it seems as if too much emphasis is placed on raising money, as it was, at Mt. Zion A. M. E. Church, where the pastor had to be convinced on several occasions that the newly formed youth fellowship was mainly for fellowship, discussions, and study and not for raising money. Thus if the church school is to fulfil its objective of Christian Education there must be adequate provision for the training of the leader and funds must be made available for the leaders and the students.

And last but not the least, the quality of the teaching

in the church school in the two churches studied must be drastically revised so that Christianity is made alive and contemporary to the students. Just as they are faced with tasks and problems in school to help their education so, should the teachers in the church school present the Gospel, not as a long ago story but as a present living message, relevant to us right here where we are and now.

The main objective of a student on a field work project is to learn certain fundamentals of the dynamics of Christian Education in a living and an actual setting. Thus he or she needs a situation where a proper program of Christian Education is taking place in order to gain these experiences. Unfortunately this has not been the case with the author. Time is also a great factor here in that a student on a field trip project does not stay long enough to see the fruits of his or her work. But perhaps in a situation where there is a real meaningful program of Christian Education there will also be certain meaningful experiences for the student on a field trip. Yet, it must be mentioned here that the real test of the resourcefulness of the field education student is seen in a situation as the author found himself where the existing program for Christian Education seemed to be inadequate.

One of the task, of the field education student according to Dr. J. Coan is "that of personal growth in the situation which he is thrust to get his field experiences, and a student

receives greater growth from a situation that demands his creative leadership ability"²⁹ as was in the case of the author. In this situation the author had the opportunity to draw upon his own resources, the insights he has gained from his theological and educational studies in the class room and his own leadership skills.

²⁹From notes taken in Dr. J. Coan's class on Christian Education.

CONCLUSIONS

Though the experience of the author was confined to the two churches mentioned and judging from what is obtained in them and other churches visited, it was evident that:

1. The young people do actually receive inadequate instruction at times.
2. The program of Christian Education is poorly organized and there is a great need for leadership in this field. The church will cease to fulfil her objectives if the teaching function is neglected.
3. A great number of the young people have left the church because the church has failed to answer their questions. Either they have been rebuked when they raised doubts or they have been made to consider the church as adult dominated, thus they have no part in the church at all.
4. Christian leadership is hard to come by and moreover the churches have not taken the trouble to seek and train leaders for any program in the church.
5. Too much of the minister's attention is devoted to preaching and raising money. Thus the service to the young people has been neglected.
6. As discovered in the two churches studied, the education of the youth is left in the hands of untrained leaders, some of whom do not have any idea of the method or principles of Christian Education.

RECOMENDATION

Thus, if the church is to fulfill her teaching functions.

1. There should be a drastic change in the sort of leadership obtained.
2. Attempts should be made to train teachers and leaders in the church.
3. For an effective program of Christian Education, the church should have a qualified person to be in charge and must now provide sufficient budget for the training of leaders and members.
4. Unless enough money is made available for the purchase of materials and books of Christian Education, the youth cannot be attracted to the church.
5. The young people should of necessity be involved in the organization of the program for them, at least in the planning stage.
6. They should be made to sit on some of the church committees so as to develop an appreciation of the functions of the church.
7. Special efforts on the part of the church leadership must be made to attract the young people to the church. When they have come, the program must be attractive and interesting enough to make them stay. This calls for some knowledge of the demands and needs of the young.

Experience also taught the author that a student on field work project becomes more creative when placed in a church where there is no proper program of Christian Education.

Part IV

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